

THE 29th ANNUAL
**WRITE
WOMEN
BACK INTO
HISTORY**
ESSAY CONTEST

2013 Theme:

Women Inspiring Innovation Through Imagination

***Celebrating Women in Science, Technology,
Engineering and Mathematics***

The Iowa Commission on the Status of Women, the Iowa Department of Education, and the State Historical Society of Iowa invite Iowa's youth to gain a deeper and more relevant appreciation of women's roles in history and celebrate March as Women's History Month by participating in the Write Women Back Into History Essay Contest.

With this year's theme, we celebrate women in science, technology, engineering, and math. Though women have always made significant contributions to these fields, historically those contributions have not been recognized as publicly as those of men. Here is a chance for Iowa's youth to change that and learn more about women in these fields.

Students are encouraged to choose a woman, preferably from Iowa, from any historical period, past or present, and write about the accomplishments of her life and how she has made a difference to the student and to society. Although Iowa women are preferred and encouraged, the subject of the essay may be a woman from another state or another country.

Deadline: January 25, 2013

Who may enter the contest?

The contest is open to any 6th- through 9th-grade student, female or male, in Iowa. Each student may submit only one essay.

How should contestants enter?

Submit essays with entrance forms by e-mailing them to women@iowa.gov no later than Friday, January 25, 2013.

Are there prizes?

Yes! Cash prizes will be awarded to the first-, second-, and third-place winner in each of the 6-7th Grade and 8-9th Grade divisions (first place: \$100; second place: \$75, and third place: \$50).

First-place winners also will receive book prizes sponsored by the Program for Women in Science and Engineering at Iowa State University and the Women in Science and Engineering Program at the University of Iowa.

Winners will be honored in a ceremony at the State Capitol in March 2013. Winners, their hometown media, and *The Des Moines Register* will be notified prior to the ceremony (March 2013). All winners and finalists will receive a certificate of participation signed by the governor.

Entry Format and Criteria for Judging

A student's own thoughts on the significance of the woman's contributions are important. A successful essay will discuss why the student researched, read about, interviewed, and/or found the subject to be a role model; it should not merely be a biographical sketch.

Entries should:

- be checked for accuracy and use of standard English procedures, such as correct punctuation, spelling, and grammar.
- be proofread for errors—not merely spell checked.
- make use of evidence and include specific examples as to why the woman should be written into history and how she is important to others and the student.
- exhibit effective use of descriptive language, voice and originality. Citing of all sources, whether primary or secondary, is mandatory.

Before submitting your entry, please make sure it fits the following guidelines:

- Double-spaced in an easy-to-read font.
- Saved as a PDF, Microsoft Word document (.doc) or Rich Text Format (.rtf).
- Not more than 1,000 words not including the source list.
- Includes a source list.

Essays should identify the following:

- Why the woman should be written into history. What meaningful contributions has she made to her community, the state, nation, or world?
- Why she is important to the student. Students should consider what people would learn about us from this essay 50 years from now.

Judges will review the essays for the following:

- **Student awareness:** Does the student effectively portray this woman's relevance in ordinary or extraordinary historical circumstances? Has the student convinced readers of this point? (Explanation of why the woman should be written into history and how she is important to others and the student.) Is it more than a biographical sketch?
- **Voice and originality:** Does the essay flow and make sense? How has the student used original words and phrases to tell the story? Is the student's voice apparent? Is the essay original in voice or spirit?
- **Mechanics:** Does the student use correct grammar, punctuation, spelling? Are sources cited? (Accuracy and use of standard English procedures: correct punctuation, spelling, grammar)
- **Adherence to all entry format rules**

Winning essays will be chosen by a panel composed of Iowa authors, historians, activists, and representatives of the sponsoring agencies.

Submit the essay with a completed entry form to women@iowa.gov. Essays become property of the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women and will not be returned.

For more information, contact Michelle Rubin at 515/281-4470, 800/558-4427, or michelle.rubin@iowa.gov.